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OFFICE OF THE JOURNAL,

Orange, N. J.

Dec. 10, 1877.

My Dear Garrison,

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Yours of Saturday reached me this morning, and gives me much pleasure. We will furnish a new illustration of the truth that honest differences of opinion need not disturb an old friendship.

I have no wish to argue the question with you either privately or publicly, being content to await the developments of the future. Let me say, however, that in speaking of the President's Southern policy, I mean more than the withdrawal of the troops from New Orleans and Columbia, viz: the purpose to win the better portion at least of the Southern people by kindness rather than by force or denunciation. Certainly I did not mean by policy anything contrary to justice and equity.

I think Grant carried the policy of coercion to an unconstitutional ~~extreme~~ extremity, and that the practical result was to foster alienations that might have been greatly lessened if not entirely overcome by a wiser course on his part. Unwittingly, so far as he was concerned, his administration at the South became the bulwark of the most atrocious frauds and robberies. Adventurers and knaves, taking advantage of his credulity and obstinacy, and of his subserviency to self-seeking politicians, persuaded him that duty & the negro required him to stand by them — the knaves aforesaid; and they went on with their stealings under the cloak of Republicanism, until they made that good name a stench in the nostrils of all decent men at the South. Of course this made the very chance the bad people there wanted, and

quick enough were they to improve it.
They made the frauds of the carpet baggers
an excuse for the exercise of violence
which slavery had so long fostered
there. Greeley and Sumner saw the
drift of things in 1871, and entered their
protest; but their warnings were scouted,
and they themselves subjected to denunciation and
persecution as enemies of the party. If
Grant had borne criticism as Hayes
is bearing it, and been willing, like him,
to listen to the advice of those who dif-
fered from him, the party might not
have been driven upon the rocks. He
was reëlected in 1872 by a heavier ex-
penditure of money than was ever
made in any five Presidential
elections before that date, much of
it raised, too, by corrupt means (it
was for this purpose the Whisky Rings
were organized, which explains the
difficulty of bringing those robbers to jus-
tice, and the ease with which Grant
was persuaded to shield them.) He took

his reëlection as an unqualified endorsement of his course, and his flatterers humored this idea; the effect was not what might have been expected. The carpet-bag villainies and the frauds of Belknap and others, gave the Democracy a cry that could not be answered. During Grant's last four years his hold upon the country was constantly weakening. The South was in the hands of men whom honest people distrusted. One Southern State after another, in the North as well as in the South; and at the close of his administration the only question was whether the Republican party could in any way be rescued from utter ruin. It was plain that to go on in Grant's way would be destruction. If Hayes fails to rally the party on a better footing, the failure will be the fault of those who brought it to such a pass.

If, after Lee's surrender, we had divided the South into Dis-

tricts and governed them for an indefinite period by military power, we might have made a very strong plea in justification. But we chose to admit them back into the Union (we denied rather that they had ever been out of it), with all the rights of States, and subject only to such restrictions as the Constitution imposes. We can do for the enfranchised negroes under that instrument just what we can do for white citizens anywhere — only this and nothing more. If that is not enough for their protection from outrage, it is the fault not of President Hayes, but of the Constitution. For my own part I believe it will take a long time to work out the virus of slavery from the white blood of the South. The negroes will no doubt suffer severely

in many localities; but I believe their sufferings will be far less under the course pursued by Rogers than under that pursued by Brownlow, and that, in the long run, it will be better for both parties that they should for themselves the terms on which they will live together. At no distant day, if not at once, there will spring up a party of white men to do justice to the negro, and gradually things will improve.

— I did not mean to write all this when I sat down, but it has run off my pen like water from a spout. It requires no answer, being intended only to give you a glimpse of my thoughts.

What I really wanted and meant to say was, that we too expect to spend Christmas in New York, and it is possible we may find time to call at the Westminster

house. At any rate we shall hope to see you in Orange.

Mr. Abbott, the editor of the Literary World, is my wife's cousin, the youngest son of her uncle Jacob.

Yours, as of old,

Oliver Johnson.

It was not a bell, but an organ, that I gave to the church in Peekskill. It is a beautiful instrument, and I heard it with delight.

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